**Course:** Writing About Film!

**Instructor:** Mr. Kontrelos, Room 214

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**Meeting times:** 6th period daily

**Credit earned:** This is an English elective course and passing grades will earn 5 English credits for each semester. Course cannot be taken for more than two semesters (consecutive or not).

**Purpose:** Writing About Film! is a class that will build the writing skills of students by utilizing film as the bridge to literacy development. The course will include, but is not limited to, critical thinking, analyzing and interpreting cinematic techniques, prediction, genre, plot and thematic discussions, artistic representations, biographical elements of film history from silent films to current day 3-D blockbusters, musicals to black and white to cartoon and animation studies. Students will write their own movie reviews and reflections on cultural influences, similarities and differences while developing their viewing, listening, and reading skills through written expression.

**Course Overview:** Visual narratives have increasingly defined cultural values, opinions, and beliefs but we often don’t think about examining films in the same way we do other narrative arts or mass communication forms. This course will introduce you to the language of film and to the critical tools used to investigate how that language creates narratives with particular resonances. We will focus on the techniques formulated to exploit the possibilities inherent within the film medium in order to learn how to *interpret* films.

Specifically, we will examine the visual, aural, and narrative conventions motion pictures employ to participate in or comment upon significant social and cultural experiences. I also hope to encourage you to be more critically aware of how films contribute to defining social norms and how certain filmmakers attempt to intervene in that process through their films.

**(Basic) Content Learning Objective:** Students will develop writing strategies to improve overall literacy skills by viewing, analyzing, and interpreting film while applying critical and creative thinking to their written work.

**Materials:** YOU, every day, on time, prepared to engage! I will provide notebooks we will be writing in daily that will stay in the classroom, but have your own pen or pencil.

**Grading:** Vocabulary quizzes, thematic discussions, daily notebook, response papers, graphic organizers, class participation, attendance, screen plays, commercials, interviews, creative writing and other fun assignments to vary throughout the semester will compile your final grade for this course. All assignments are linked to Colorado Common Core Standards for Literacy.

**Make up Assignments:** *“The length of a film should be directly related to the human bladder.”*-Alfred Hitchcock.

NOTE: This class is directly after lunch so please use facilities prior to class starting. We will often be writing in an interactive role with the films, and I will not allow you to make up missed work for a bathroom break.

Any missed class/viewing assignments have 24 hours to be completed and turned in to me. It is your responsibility to ask for the assignment (s).

**IMPORTANT DETAIL:** *ON OCCASION, THIS CLASS MAY WATCH ALL OR PART OF “R” RATED MOVIES. A PARENT/GUARDIAN MUST SIGN THE CONSENT FORM IN ORDER FOR A STUDENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THESE VIEWINGS. (Consent forms to go home first day with students).*

An alternative lesson will be provided for students unable to participate in R viewings.

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